Correspondence.

THE NEW BUILDING-ACT.

SIR,—On looking over the new Building-Act, I find that the thicknesses of the walls to the different rates of building are thus described to be, viz.—8½ in. 13 in. 17½ in. 21½ in. and 26 in. I have before me some stock bricks from the fields belonging to the Messrs. Rhodes and Messrs. Webb, two brickmakers in the vicinity of London, and also some from the fields of Messrs. Herron and Rutter of Cowley, who make a great number annually. I find in the sizes of the bricks from the before-mentioned field, an almost imperceptible variation, *if any;* they are as near as possible 9 in. long and 4½ in. wide. Now, Sir, how is it possible (I speak as a bricklayer) to keep to the thickness of the walls in the new Act, without cropping the bricks? If you work the bricks without a cross-joint, you cannot do it; and if you crop the brick, you never will make sound work, besides the extra labour.

How is this difficulty to be got over? You can perhaps point out a remedy.

Stoke Newington, August 28. CHARLES EVE.

[The intention is that the thicknesses shall not be less than those stated; which might be the case if bricks somewhat smaller than ordinary were used; the precaution is observed in the old Act, which will next year be superseded by the new one.—ED.]

SIR,—In glancing over the Building-Act, contained in your excellent journal of this week, I am glad to find that the clause appointing the institute of the B. A. as examiners of the new district surveyors has been *struck out*, and a clause inserted instead, nearly in accordance with my suggestions contained in a letter in "The Builder," No. 72, with one exception, I do not see any provision made for the payment of the examiners. B.

MEASURING WORK.

SIR,—I am a small builder, and I have frequently to measure work performed by myself; I have experienced on more than one occasion an objection on the part of the surveyor, employed by the party for whom I have done the work, to measure with me, on the ground that I was not a regular surveyor; in other cases, where there has been some difference in the quantity, they have refused to refer the matter to another surveyor, unless I had previously had my work measured by a surveyor. What I wish to know is this—is it requisite that I should become a regular surveyor? If so, how am I to proceed to obtain that distinction? Is any licence required? If so, what would be the expense? "TYRO."

[We think nothing could be more ridiculous than for any surveyor to refuse to measure the work of any building with the master tradesman who has executed it, and is respectable and capable of measuring his own work, and either has time for it, or chooses to do so: we venture to say the surveyor who assumes such airs, will be found to rank with the "*queer ones.*". The licence is a common appraiser's one of 10s. To become a *regular* surveyor, requires a regular tuition, ten years' study, in fact; the fee for tuition may range from 50*l.* to 200*l.*, according to the rank, repute, ability, and practice of the master.—ED.]

PRACTICAL DRAWING FOR ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING.

SIR,—The beauty and advantages of drawing will, I am sure, have manifested themselves to every person connected with the building-craft, and especially to the steady industrious working-man, who has seen others convey their ideas so clearly by it, to whom I now particularly refer. I have on many occasions seen clever workmen, who have laboured under difficulties in the performance of their work from drawings, through not being able to associate correct ideas relative to the drawings and the work to be done; and again I have seen good workmen labour under alike difficulties consequent upon a bad education, in explaining their ideas of work that was doing, and that had to be done; whereas if a knowledge of drawing were inculcated, the pencil could be employed with ease and satisfaction.

Feeling [illegible] that [illegible] industriously employ their time in the workshop, and who enjoy the fireside of the cottage, reading your valuable magazine, will labour under the difficulties I have above mentioned, to remedy this, I offer the hint that a column in "The Builder" be devoted for a short time to the laying of the fundamental principles of the different kinds of drawing suited to practical purposes, of which you will know much better than I can say. This would have its good effects in various ways:—First, it would be of great practical use to the possessor. Secondly, improve the taste and enlarge the ideas connected with the craft. And thirdly, be an endless source of improvement and amusement during the winter months, when many of the artizans have to be at home. It would, I feel confident, cause many to make their cottage their studio, instead of seeking amusement at the tavern.

August 27th. J. F.

CRACK HOUSES.

SIR,—The object of THE BUILDER is, I presume, not only to represent the interest of this numerous and influential body, and the several trades and professions connected therewith, conveying to them all possible information, but also occasionally to admonish those who, not having the fear of loss of reputation before their eyes, and greedy of gain, 'put up houses,' which not only compromise the whole class of builders, but also, besides clearing out the pockets of ignorant purchasers, endanger the lives of individuals. We all know what a put up house means, but I am sure respectable builders are not wholly aware to what an extent the system goes. I was walking about the vicinity of High-street, Camden Town, a few weeks since, and was more surprised than amused to see a whole row of buildings springing up as mushrooms in a meadow, and nearly as frail in fabric. The bricks, were they worthy of that name, were not only old material, but such as I observe dug out of the foundations of the old buildings now disappearing from Bloomsbury, literally rotten, and scarcely an entire one to be seen among them: nor was there a redeeming quality in the mortar, which was as black as bitumen, without any of its adhesive qualities: the timber of the beams and joists was of the same quality, and appeared to be derived from the same source, having all the venerable marks of antiquity about it. On the other hand, the floors were young sucklings, such as will soon shrink before the hand of Time, leaving large chasms between each other, to the endangerment of children's legs and the loss of their playthings. The exterior of these sepulchres of decayed brick was then handsomely covered with stucco and white wash, the doors and shop-fronts were prettily painted, and in the lower windows might be seen sundry bills, on which was written in a fair legible hand, "This house to be let or sold!"

Your readers may smile, Mr. Editor, but I positively see nothing to laugh at; the man who buys such a bargain buys it very often with his little all. In the large neighbourhood in the rear of St. Pancras Workhouse, there are numbers of this kind of tenements already put together, or still perpetrating; but here we sometimes find an excuse, for the experiment of residing therein is first made by the builders themselves, who, like Birmingham gunsmiths, prove them first ere they go off in the market.

A friend of mine lately purchased a house near the Regent's-park for 800*l.*, as valued by a surveyor; on re-valuing six months afterwards, it was found to be worth less than 480*l.*; and in less than one twelvemonth, a general rebellion had taken place of the members of the house, every board in the establishment separating from its fellow, the handsome paper had separated from the damp walls, and hung in festoons in the upper part of the house; the house itself had settled down on one side, the windows shattered at every footfall, and nothing short of 100*l.* could repair the dilapidations.

I could multiply instances of like putting up without number; but this is sufficient to shew that the system, if not checked, will very soon close the business of the builders: for every one thus taken in, imbues fifty small or large capitalists with a sense of his wrongs. And it would be highly impolitic to check the present prevailing spirit of investing capital in houses, [illegible] by which can be made in the present day, if the capitalist be treated with any degree of fairness. There never was a better time for builders to rise a step or two in their trade, and to strengthen their hands by moderate profits; and I do think that all who have their credit at stake should unite to put down practices which bring the whole of them into disrepute.

W. T. B.

ADULTERATION OF WHITE LEAD.

SIR,—Permit me through your very valuable journal to direct public attention to the enormous adulterations of white lead now taking place in various parts of the outskirts of the metropolis. This trade of adulteration is openly carried on, and is thus managed:—A quantity of whiting is put into a tub, in which there is a machine similar to that used in mixing the clay for bricks; to this is added linseed oil, in certain proportions, and the whole is intimately mixed by the revolving knives. For the second process it passes between two mill-stones, and on being ejected has even then a very striking resemblance to white lead: this, I believe, is all the preparation required for mixing, and in this state it is applied for the purposes of adulteration: paints of every description being mixed with this valueless commodity for the consumer, the extent of adulteration being guided by the conscience of the manufacturer, or the carelessness or inattention of the tradesman who purchases the rubbish. I have often wondered why it was that white lead paints were marked up at a much less price than the wholesale cost of this material. The enigma is now solved; but the wonder still remains how large consumers of various coloured paints should have shut their eyes to this self evident fact, consenting to pay the reduced price of white lead for common chalk. It is said by those who manufacture the spurious commodity that the paint is actually improved by the mixing, that it dries better, has a better appearance, and is more durable. If such be the fact, and I readily conceive such may be the case, it is certainly a singular exception to an universal rule; but even supposing this to be the case, would it not be more to the interest of the painters, &c., to mix for themselves?

The extensive adulteration of an article so extentively used in the building-trade demands the serious consideration of every person victimized by the process.

Sept. 1st. VERAX.

WORKS ON PRACTICE.

SIR,—I have taken in "The Builder" from the commencement; will you, therefore, be kind enough to inform me in your next number the best work published as a guide to surveyors and appraisers, and where it can be purchased? Y. Z.

[The Student's Guide for Measuring, 7s. 6d.; Gibbons on Dilapidations, 9s. 0d.; Ditto on Fixtures, 3s. 6d.; and Inwood's Tables for purchasing Estates, are books of the required kind, and may be obtained of Weale, Holborn.—ED.]

A MONUMENT TO THE LATE DR. DALTON.—On Monday week, the members of various literary and scientific societies in Manchester, held a preliminary meeting, with the object of considering what steps should be taken towards erecting a monument in memory of the late Dr. Dalton. Many gentlemen addressed the meeting, among whom was Mr. S. E. Cottam, who suggested that the most honourable memorial would be the erection of some edifice to be called the "Daltonian Institution," where the scientific discoveries of the philosopher might be promulgated from generation to generation. The meeting concluded by adopting the following resolution:—"That a requisition should be presented to the mayor, to convene a public meeting to determine what steps should be taken to secure the erection of such monument; and also to consider as to the propriety of testifying in any further, and in what manner, the sense entertained by this community of the invaluable services rendered to science by the late illustrious philosopher."

The noble Border Castle of Naworth is in course of being rebuilt under the instructions and taste of Lord Morpeth.

For comp[illegible]